

THE DAVID SCOTT BRIDLE PATH FROM MAWPHLANG TO LAD-MAWPHLANG
CONNECTING MAWPHLANG AND SOHRA.
(16 KILOMETRES IN LENGTH).

A Historical Trail Recognized by the United Nations as an Indigenous Community Conserve Area (ICCA)

Introduction: David Scott, a British Administrator was instrumental in building of the trail in 1827-1829 to lessen the distance and to escape the heat of traveling from Mawphlang to Sylhet. The trail, previously part of a network of foot and horse paths used by indigenous Khasi crisscrossing the hills as well as more established trade routes, was also expanded to increase trade between Guwahati in Assam, Shillong and Sohra (Cherrapunji) in Meghalaya, and Sylhet in Bangladesh. When it was developed the entire trail from Assam to Bangladesh covered 130 miles. This stretch of infamous Scott Trail or David Scott Bridle Path between Mawphlang and Lad Mawphlang is roughly 16 kms long. This officer involved the Indian Rajput, Sikhs, and others to make the construction completed in time.

The Trail Details:

1. **Km. 0 the Trailhead:** This trail stretches from Mawphlang through Nongrum Village towards the South-eastern part of Mawphlang (**elevation entry point-1845m**). The trail-head has a Kiosk with water and snacks for sale.
2. **Km. 0.5 Ka Kor Shonmai:** The first landmark is a 5 minute walk from the Village road--a resting place called 'KA KOR KA SHONMAI' (named after a daughter of Dorsing Lyngdoh, the 1st Lyngdoh with the British Sanad).
3. **Km. 2 Mawsahep:** At this point you will find a tomb erected in memory of a child 'fondly called Camilla' in script on the tomb (***'To a child fondly called Camilla 'soft silken primrose fading timelessly, 1843'***). Before reaching this tomb, along the trail are the Simpanghang Falls, part of Mawphlang Dam at the famous place called Hapmaram. (This poor man from Maram area fell down into this gorge due to his unfamiliarity of the winding trail on his first time carrying loads from Sohra to Mawphlang.) From this point looking westwards one will experience and witness the thick pristine Community Forest of Hima Mawphlang which is the main animal corridor to Mawphlang Sacred Grove. The trail continues winding down to Lyngkienwar and Umiam Mawphlang river.
4. **Km. 5 The suspension bridge: (1569 meters)** Before reaching the suspension bridge at Weidung there is a small stream called Lyngkienwar, but during the monsoon it swells up to an unexpected height, which is why the bridge that was constructed out there was washed away about 70 years ago. The same happened to the bridge at Weidung. This bridge (hanging old beautiful bridge) called Jingkieng doi-doi was washed away by flash flood on 8th September 2007 and was reconstructed by PWD, Meghalaya Tourism and PHE Department through initiatives taken by the enthusiastic leadership of the then Meghalaya Chief Secretary Shri. Ranjan Chatterjee, construction started in 2008 - 2009 and completed in 2012.

5. **Km. 6 Wahtham Valley:** After crossing the bridge, walk through the Lowland Wahtham valley (lowest point of the trail--1525m). This area was used by people from Mawphlang to cultivate all types of agricultural products and the place is so fertile. The stream is crystal clear and tasty. Tradition tells us that 'Tham' title derives from this place as this family originated from here long, long ago. The bridge to cross this stream was washed away 90 years back due to swelling waters of the monsoon.
6. **Km. 9 Laitsohma Village:** After climbing the winding trail 3 kms up on a steep and uphill climb from Wahtham valley, you reach Laitsohma Village. This is where Khmah Nongsai resided before moving her family to Mawphlang Village. From Laitsohma we can see clearly the Mawphlang Sacred groves from behind.
7. **Km. 12 The Arc or stone bridge at Mawnguidbriew:** From Laitsohma we

follow a plateau to reach very beautiful Scenery including Phud Um Ja-Ut, Mawnguid- Briew and an Arc Bridge, the elephant hill, the Crocodile sitting on the rock, the Mansion on a rock.

8. **Km. 14- Kor Parkti:** When you left the most beautiful and the legendary of Mawnguid briew, after 2 kms walking on the beautiful trail with beautiful scenery on both side of the trail you will reach another resting place **Kor Parkti**, we can take a rest if needed as these are constructed in every outskirts of the village on the main trail of path so that commuters with loads shall take rest after a long journey so that they may be able to continue their journey in a relaxed manner. The trail descends 2 more kilometers to reach wah-Umiong river and then climb up to Sohra Main Road.
9. **Km. 16- Main Shillong Sohra road:** You have reached the final destination of the trail. The elevation at the exit point is 1,785 meters. The time taken to complete the trek may varies from 3 hours to 5 hours, depending on how we are trekking.



Its importance might not be the same as of the past, but the importance of this trail for the present generation is to give a space for nature lovers to trek down the trail undisturbed by the hub of the cities and noise pollution. The trail is reached able by a strong boy of ten till the fit and healthy man of seventy. It is a bridle path wide enough to trek and not so steep so as to make one having difficulty by walking on it. This is an important part of the Indigenous Community Conserve Area where the habitats of flora and fauna is still pristine. This trail should be preserve and no metaled or black top road should ever made a try out here so that this small path of just 16 kms should have the legacy and the remembrance of one of the famous trail connecting Guwahati and Sylhet.

The significant of the trail have its own manifestation, by drawing large numbers of people from various walk of life. There are VIPs, VVIPs, Government officials, besides students and others who have been enjoying trough this trail. Along the trail there 101 herbs and plants that have medicinal values. Once this trail is arranged with good guides, the explorers and trekkers will learn more of its significance that mere words hardly can expressed. As it has been also mentioned above that that this area is the main Animal

Corridor proper treatment of harmony approach should be always the top priority so that we can sustained and enjoy the bliss and legacy of this trail.

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Photos above:

1. Entry point at Nongrum Mawphlang, 2. Kor Ka Shonmai (Kor =Resting Place). 3. The Trail from Mawphlang side. Mawkor Sahep (Camila Tomb). 5. Jingkieng Nar (hanging bridge) crossing Umiam River. 6. Umjaut at Mawbeh. 7. Arc bridge at Mawbeh. 8. Elephant Hill at Mawnguidbriew. 9. Mawkynshoit at Mawnguid briew. 10. The Mansion at Mawbeh. 11. Kor Parkti at Pynnoh Umiong.

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